

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12
OMB-01 OIC-02 /099 W

-----121930Z 013965 /44

O 121849Z MAR 77

FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2750

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 0745

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNSC, EG, IS, XF

SUBJ: EGYPTIANS MOVING TOWARD SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON
SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MIDDLE EAST REPORT

1. LATE MARCH 11, EGYPTIAN PERMREP MEGUID INFORMED AMBAS-
SADORS YOUNG AND SHERER THAT HE HAD JUST RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS
REJECTING THE PLAN FOR LOW-KEY SECURITY COUNCIL HANDLING
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MIDDLE EAST REPORT. EVIDENCING
SOME DISCOMFORT, MEGUID SAID SPECIFICALLY THE US SCENARIO
FOR SECURITY COUNCIL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY LETTER OF THE SECRETARY-
GENERAL'S REPORT, WITHOUT A FULL DEBATE, "WOULD NOT BE
POSSIBLE". THE EGYPTIANS WANTED TO HOLD A SECURITY
COUNCIL MEETING ON THIS ITEM. THEY SUGGESTED THAT THE
COUNCIL HOLD ITS DEBATE ON BENIN ON MARCH 15 AND THEN USE
THE BALANCE OF THE WEEK FOR THE MIDDLE EAST DEBATE, HOPE-
FULLY PERMITTING THE COUNCIL TO TAKE UP THE SOUTHERN
AFRICAN DEBATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MARCH 21 SCHEDULE
DESIRED BY THE AFRICAN GROUP.

2. SHERER EXPRESSED OUR REGRET AT MEGUID'S INSTRUCTIONS,
POINTED OUT THE LIKELIHOOD THAT, ONCE A MIDDLE EAST
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DEBATE IS OPENED, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO TERMINATE
BEFORE MARCH 21. SHERER ALSO ARGUED THE CASE AGAINST ANY
DEBATE AT THIS TIME ON GROUNDS THAT IT COULD NOT HELP
THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS ALREADY UNDERWAY FOR A MIDDLE
EAST PEACE SETTLEMENT. HE URGED THAT THE EGYPTIANS
CONSIDER AT LEAST POSTPONING THE DEBATE UNTIL APRIL.
MEGUID REJECTED THESE SUGGESTIONS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH

HIS INSTRUCTIONS.

3. MAURITIAN PERM REP RAMPHUL, WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT IN THE CONVERSATION DURING A RECEPTION IN THE US MISSION, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD EXPECTED NO DEBATE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AT THIS TIME. HE DEFERRED TOTALLY TO THE WISHES OF THE EGYPTIANS. MEGUID AND RAMPHUL AGREED THAT BOTH ARAB AND AFRICAN GROUPS WOULD HAVE TO MEET "SOON" TO DISCUSS THE POTENTIAL CONFLICT IN THE INTERESTS OF THE TWO GROUPS.

4. SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM HAS BEEN URGENTLY IN TOUCH WITH AMBASSADOR BENNETT EARLY MARCH 12 SEEKING INFORMATION AS TO THE STATUS OF EGYPTIAN PLANS. HE HAD TOLD WALDHEIM AND UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL URQUHART THAT WE HAD, AS A RESULT OF OUR INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS WITH COUNCIL MEMBERS LAST WEEK, PERCEIVED NO EAGERNESS IN THE COMMUNITY FOR A MIDDLE EAST DEBATE AT THIS TIME. IT WOULD BE OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT AMBASSADOR MEGUID HIMSELF WAS IN AGREEMENT THAT A DEBATE WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL. THE PRESIDENCY OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (US) HAS NOT BEEN FORMALLY APPROACHED BY THE EGYPTIANS WITH A REQUEST FOR A MEETING. THE INFORMAL AND GENERAL INFORMATION PROVIDED LATE MARCH 11 IS ALL OF THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US AT THIS TIME. WALDHEIM ASKED TO BE KEPT CLOSELY INFORMED ABOUT THE US POSITION AND TACTICAL PLANS AND EXPRESSED EAGERNESS TO COOPERATE WITH US IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE. HE TOLD BENNETT THAT HE HAD A PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR MEGUID ON MONDAY MORNING, MARCH 14.
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HE NOW EXPECTS THAT HE WILL BE DISCUSSING EGYPTIAN PLANS AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF MEGUID'S NEW INSTRUCTIONS.

5. THE COMMUNITY HAS GENERALLY SHOWN SURPRISE AT THIS TURN IN EGYPTIAN PLANS. THERE SEEMS TO BE UNIVERSAL AGREEMENT THAT THE LOCAL EGYPTIAN MISSION WAS NOT RECOMMENDING A MIDDLE EAST DEBATE AT THIS TIME. URQUHART RECALLED, HOWEVER, THAT AT THE TIME OF WALDHEIM'S MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMY IN CAIRO LAST MONTH, FAHMY REMAINED INSISTENT TO THE END ON HOLDING A SECURITY COUNCIL MIDDLE EAST DEBATE IN THE MONTH OF MARCH. THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY AND THE PRESS, WHICH HAS LEARNED OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS, APPEAR TO ASSUME THAT THE INSTRUCTIONS ORIGINATED WHOLLY IN CAIRO.

6. AMBASSADOR MEGUID AND THE EGYPTIAN MISSION HAVE BEEN UNAVAILABLE TO US MARCH 11. BECAUSE OF THE NEED FOR CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE ARAB AND AFRICAN GROUPS AND THE

MEETING SCHEDULED BETWEEN THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND
AMBASSADOR MEGUID, WE EXPECT LITTLE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT
OVER THE WEEKEND. WE HAVE NOT LEARNED, EITHER FROM THE
EGYPTIANS, THE SECRETARIAT, OR OTHER SOURCES, PRECISELY
WHAT THE EGYPTIAN OBJECTIVE MAY BE IN TERMS OF A SECURITY
COUNCIL OUTCOME OF THE DEBATE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING REPORTS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977USUNN00745
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770086-0434
Format: TEL
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770365/aaaaceuz.tel
Line Count: 123
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 888d24b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3124687
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EGYPTIANS MOVING TOWARD SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MIDDLE EAST REPORT
TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS, XF, UNSC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/888d24b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009